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72² PROF. YOUNG'S DOCTRINE

OF

'Freedom & Necessity'

REVIEWED

BY

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"FREEDOM AND NECESSITY."

"A Lecture delivered in Knox' College, on the 6th of April, 1870, at the close of the College Session, by the Rev. Geo. Paxton Young, M. A., Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, Knox College, Toronto."

Through the kind offices of a friend, I have recently become acquainted with a pamphlet bearing the foregoing title-page. Though on a perplexed subject in Philosophy, it is written with clearness and force, and with a happy freedom from technicalities. Indeed such are its excellencies in these respects that I fear it must reflect upon me, if I have misunderstood any passages, or failed to reach the author's meaning. Yet in Metaphysical research, one honest inquirer after truth may readily exercise forbearance toward another; for in no other sphere of human investigation is it so difficult to convey to others our ideas precisely as they are in our own minds.

The author aims, as set forth in the opening sentence of the Lecture, "to inquire whether and in what sense men are free agents, and whether and in what sense their actions are necessary." To this end he states voluntary action to be "the exertion of energy by an intelligent being; the subjective putting forth of effort in the direction of an end which is in the mind's view;" a statement of the case, so far as it goes, to which the most thorough going libertarian could ill object. Let it be understood that this exertion of energy is not trammelled or interfered with by any power, greater or less; this subjective putting forth of effort is not excited, controlled, hindered, directed or diverted to any extent or in any degree by any influence other than the agent's consideration of the premises before the mind; and the advocates of personal freedom will readily yield assent.

That all action of rational and moral beings is upon motive, there can be no doubt. Indeed it is impossible to conceive how action should be moral, that is, have the moral element, devoid of motives. Liberty is by no means a question of the existence or non-existence of motives, any more than of the existence or non-existence of the agent; but it is a question of the nature of the agent, and the nature of motives, and their respective powers and relations.

These two points, "that voluntary action is subjective energy," and "that it is directed to a definite end in the mind's view," that is, "is done from motive," are well maintained by the Lecturer. Still we enquire, does he after all, vindicate or abdicate, save or lose, genuine human freedom? Does he declare genuine personal liberty, so as to ensure the doctrine of personal accountability, and justify it on philosophical grounds? Does he surrender to necessity, or preserve to liberty the grand ideas of duty, obligation, merit, demerit, punishment and reward? From so fair a beginning, does he proceed to a noble end? Or does he beat round the circle of necessity, without escaping from the enclosure, and thereby virtually lose the doctrines of human duty, right and accountability? Does he after all give us a moral freedom, the crown and the glory of humanity; or does he bury our hopes in what he calls a "moral necessity"? I must confess that to me the latter appears to be the case.

The old definition of liberty, "the power to do, or not to do, as the mind directs," "the power to do as we will," is well and promptly rejected; and Edwards' circular theory of the "strongest motive" is exposed and discarded. Mill's attempt to substitute Association and Habit for Reason and Motive in moral action is laid out, where it belongs, along side of Bentham's attempt to resolve right and wrong into pleasure and pain, and Hume's attempt to account for our ideas of cause and effect by experience. But it is just in controverting Mill's position that the pamphlet seems to me to surrender our moral liberty by conceding to him that the most trustworthy witness of it does not and cannot depone to its existence. This witness is consciousness; and this concession is made, not by saying that consciousness cannot bear witness to freedom in any form, but by crowding freedom into a narrower compass than belongs to it; indeed by cutting off the

side of it which is in the free person, the agent, which is the essence of freedom. Mr. Mill says, freedom being a power to act, and action being necessarily contingent and future, it *cannot* of course come within the sphere of consciousness. Professor Young would draw it within this sphere by saying we are conscious of freedom *only in acting*, and as the acting is present, *here and now*, it is of course within the range of consciousness. It is astonishing what a grasping after the shadow and losing the substance is here; what a grasping after the *acting* and losing the *power*. The *power*, the *power* to act is in the man and of the man; and is the substance and basis of his agency; and of it, the power, its existence and scope, he is conscious, not only *in acting*, but, even before acting, on the proposition or occasion to act. Freedom, though a perfect unit, is a two sided power; the one side always in the man, the other side, often developed in *acting*; and it is of this perpetually present and sufficient power the man is ever conscious, not only after subjective acting or determining has begun, but on the first instance of thought and the slightest suggestion of action, before it shows even the bud of a determination. Bring the man himself into the sphere of consciousness in any way, and you must bring in his liberty; for his liberty is his true and essential manhood. Let it be by a sensation, little as we can help many of our sensations; or by an intellectual act or process, necessary as some of them are; and the liberty stands just along side the feeling or the process in the light of consciousness and under her eye; not, indeed it may be, the liberty to change or destroy either, but to apply or direct, to use or to let alone, as the case may be. Even when stern outer necessity is on the man and he must take the odor or yield practically to the conclusion, his consciousness gives him freedom by the very rock against which it lashes. Thus it is, we conceive, that the concession is made to Mill by letting down the true conception of human freedom, and taking, so to speak, only one side of it; making it less than that to which consciousness does bear witness, the whole of which is indispensable for human accountability.

The case, we take it, is similar to the mistake of Kant, though precisely at the opposite pole. Kant did nobly in vindicating first principles of Reason; but conceded to Hume that their force is only subjective, and so eventually lost all. Professor Young maintains a nobler freedom than Edwards or Mill ever dreamed

of. But with a seeming desire to meet Mill half way, he concedes that we are conscious of freedom only *in making the subjective determination*, and thereby, as will plainly appear in the sequel, loses all. Kant gave up the objective side and so set German Philosophy astray. Professor Young gives up the subjective side in this case, and so lands in a relentless and irresponsible "Moral necessity." For in the case of liberty in Man, the *power* we speak of, is subjective ; and the action or determining is its objective side. And of the whole thing consciousness is cognizant.

True to its dual action, here as elsewhere, consciousness lays hold of the power, the liberty, the proper self, on the one hand ; and its acting, willing, determining on the other. But it is not only in willing or determining there is this consciousness of *self* or *power*. In perception or memory ; without willing or before willing, there is the same consciousness of *self* ; and hence the same consciousness of liberty. If by his "subjective acting," Professor Young meant every mental movement and affection by which we are brought into self-consciousness, as well as willing or determining, there could be no objection to his statement. For consciousness at its first and quickest light gives us liberty. But he means *willing*, and not the antecedent and natural spiritual activity in sensation and perception. But this very activity of sensation, perception, and conception antecedent to willing gives us liberty. The very union and friction of body and spirit in our waking hours keep us in sensation enough to hold us in consciousness ; and hence to hold us in liberty, and in an unfailing sense of liberty. And that antecedent to and outside of all *determinations* of the will. For liberty is the inalienable property of intelligence ; it is in the very nature and texture of the human soul. The soul cannot be conscious without being conscious of liberty. And it is surely not necessary to begin to will to bring us into consciousness. Hence it is not necessary to begin to will to bring us to a sense of liberty. If we had to wait to begin the putting forth of an effort in the direction of an end in the mind's view before we felt our freedom, we should never feel it ; for we would never put forth such an effort unless we were first conscious of freedom. It is too late in the day to talk of a "deceptive sense" of liberty ; and no one ever dreamed that we come to the knowledge of our liberty gradually, or little by little from the openings of experience. It is the first flash of intelligence ; and the babe proves

its consciousness of it ; though it cannot describe it or call it by name. Hence further, the doctrine of consciousness of freedom in acting only, is contradictory and self-destructive.

As this is an important point in the inquiry we are prosecuting, we may be allowed to quote and examine the author's statements affecting it. "Mr. J. S. Mill * * * draws the conclusion, that the cause of freedom is lost. The appeal to consciousness on which alone the assertion of freedom can be based, fails, because the circumstance which the witness is called to prove is one to which he cannot possibly depone. Mr. Mill's position here is impregnable, if the true conception of freedom be that which his argument assumes it to be. But I deny that this is the true conception of freedom. We are conscious of being free, not in respect of things which we are not doing, and may never do, but in the actions which we perform." And again, "In reasoning against the dogma of Liberty of Indifference I have taken the position that we are conscious of *freedom in acting*, but not of *freedom to act* in one or other of a variety of ways in which we are not acting at the moment."

The question is as to the testimony consciousness on the subject of personal liberty. Is the man, the mind, free? Have we power to act in one or other of a variety of ways in which we are not acting at the moment? Had we in the beginning power to start in a different line of action from that in which we are moving? That is, might we at this moment have been doing something different from what we are doing? Can we now arrest the present course of action, and turn our energy in another direction? What does our consciousness say of this matter? It affirms every time, and the fact sustains the affirmations. Else freedom is a delusion.

Mr. Mill, following up his utilitarianism, in which genuine freedom and human accountability are coldly sepulchred, avers that the cause of freedom is lost, because consciousness does not and cannot attest the fact of its existence. Of the ordinary conception of liberty as an ability to do this or that or the other of many things we are not now doing, he says, consciousness restricted to present facts can tell nothing whatever. In this view he cleaves close to the nature of consciousness, which is indeed a witness of only the immediate present, of the mental fact now, and not of any certainty, possibility or contingency, past or future. So far, so good. But then on the other side he totally

fails as to the nature of the thing to be attested, and which is by consciousness, distinctly and positively attested. Professor Young also draws clearly the lines bounding the province of consciousness ; and also in my opinion fails as to the nature of the thing to be attested. Hence he affirms with Mill that on the doctrine of Indifference the cause of freedom is lost, for we are not conscious of a liberty of Indifference. And so far he is right. If there is no other conception of liberty than an Indifferency, there is no liberty ; for we are not conscious of this strange fiction of a false Philosophy, and Indifference. Now he attempts to save our liberty from both Mill's scheme ~~and~~ that of the Indifferentists by making us conscious of *freedom in acting*, but not of *freedom to act* in one way or another of many. Now I deem Mill's utilitarian scheme wrong from beginning to end. There is not in it a ray of the pure light that flashes on genuine liberty. Also, with Professor Young I reject the liberty of Indifference, for reasons which I shall presently show. But I do not by any means allow that an exhaustive alternative lies between the scheme of Indifference and Professor Young's scheme of *liberty in acting*. We are conscious of liberty in acting to be sure ; because we are conscious of liberty all the time we are conscious. The proposition is true, but it is not the whole truth. It does not include the whole scope of freedom. It is not equal to the just conception of a perfect liberty. This perfect liberty is what Mill's utilitarianism knows nothing whatever of, and what clearly understood, will enlarge and rectify the scheme of the paper under consideration. I hold that our liberty is not merely a *liberty in acting* ; but also a *liberty to act* in one way or another, it may be of a thousand, in which we are not now acting ; and I also hold that this latter is the liberty to which consciousness bears witness.

It occurs to me we have a "petitio principii" in that it is said a consciousness of *freedom in acting* is not a consciousness of *freedom to act* in one way or other of a score of different ways. The fallacy lies hidden in that word "freedom" in the expression, "conscious of freedom in acting." For if "freedom" means anything, it means freedom to act ; uncontrolled, unfettered power to act ; so that the "to act" is enwombed in the "freedom." It is a living union ; separation is death. Hence the expression really means, "conscious of *freedom to act* in acting." So readily granted, and so unmistakably certain is this, that men ordinarily consider it

tautological to say "free to act"; and conceive they have said all, when they say, "the man is free."

We are conscious of freedom in acting. But what freedom is it of which we are conscious? Undeniably it is the freedom to act in one or another of a variety of ways in which we are not acting at the moment. That is, while we are doing this thing, we know, we are conscious we *might* be doing another. We are conscious we *could* suspend action if we would; conscious that we *can* break the present line of determinations at any point; *can* change our course of action to obtain the end in view by another route; or *can* seek an entirely different end. And herein I use the word "action" in its metaphysical sense; subjectively, as indicated in the lecture. It is the "exertion of an energy," "the subjective putting forth of effort by an intelligent being"; whether that exertion be instantaneous on the provocation; or with deliberation, preparatory to a final determination to a certain course; or after this full resolve, in the repeated or protracted determinations as to the adoption of measures to render the central purpose effective. No matter how hastily, or how deliberately we determine, we are ever conscious of a power to determine otherwise. Rationally or passionately or conscientiously, we may say we cannot; but arbitrarily we can. But this is only a question as to the agent's choice of motives.

There is then covered up in the word "freedom" the very idea that Professor Young rejects. That is, he at once uses and rejects it, which involves an absurdity. Freedom in acting is freedom to act in acting, that is, to take another act than the one we are taking. And consciousness of freedom in acting is consciousness of freedom to act in other way or ways than the one we are taking. This is the ever abiding testimony of consciousness, and never forsakes us. Freedom is freedom and nothing less, whether it be before acting, or in acting, or through acting, to the very end. Consciousness tells us so, and surely consciousness will not lie. The theory of the lecture separates things that are inseparable, and creates an opposition where there is none in nature. It misinterprets the testimony of consciousness and covers up its fallacy in a word.

To help to a decision whether *liberty in acting*, or *liberty to act* is the real testimony of consciousness, let us follow Professor Young through his practical illustration. "I am at liberty," he

says, "either to leave the platform on which I stand, or to remain in my present position. Undoubtedly I am. But what is here is something altogether different from the liberty of Indifference on which I have been remarking. The meaning is: I have learned from past experience that certain motions of my limbs are consequent on certain subjective energies; arguing then from the past to the future, I believe that if I were at the present moment to put forth such and such energies, these would issue in movements of my limbs, in virtue of which I should step off the platform; while if the requisite energies be not put forth, I shall remain where I am. But though I am convinced that the one result or the other shall take place, accordingly as certain subjective energies are or are not exerted, the conviction is not a datum of consciousness; it is an inference from experience, and one having nothing whatever to do with my free agency, properly so called; but only with the outward results which experience teaches us to connect with particular exertions of free agency."

The conviction as to the connection of the locomotion or non-locomotion with the subjective energies is not indeed a datum of consciousness. But then consciousness *has some datum*. Its eye is not shut amid the movements or proposed movements of these subjective energies. And the very question at issue is, "What is this datum of consciousness?" Is it not the clear attestation to the Professor, even before he acts subjectively, that he has complete control of the subjective energies and can direct them at pleasure? If experience informs him that the outer motion obeys the subjective act, does not consciousness as decisively declare there is not only freedom in an act, but to any subjective act; and does it not declare the existence of this power, not only in the acting but also before the acting, and continually?

In the illustration just quoted, the liberty to leave the platform, as interpreted, is justly said to be different from the liberty of Indifference. It is also entirely different from the liberty in acting, set forth in the pamphlet. It is the Lockian and Edwardian liberty, that is no liberty at all; that can be annihilated with ropes and chains. All that is necessary on this system to destroy man's accountability is to tie his hands and feet. No one could for a moment expect the subjective consciousness to gauge the objective locomotion.

Surely Prof. Young cannot put forward his interpretation of the liberty to leave the platform as either the popular or the philosophical conception of liberty ! What man is there, when he says he is at liberty to leave the platform, that understands him merely to mean that after he has passed the volition, his feet will obey that volition ? What man is there, be he rustic or learned Doctor, but understands him to mean that he has power to *determine* to stay or leave, as well as physical power to walk after he has determined ? It seems like trifling with the grandest instincts of humanity to say we mean by liberty in such a case as the one supposed merely the movement of the limbs, the motion of the body. This does not approach even the popular conception of liberty, which embraces in its scope the motion of the mind at least as prominently as the motion of the body. The human race has no scepticism and practically allows no cavil here. By being at liberty to adopt one or other of two courses or a dozen that may be open to them, men do not mean that they are not tied fast, or chained down, or held by a giant, or disabled by a paralysis. Such a thought in the use of this expression scarcely ever enters their heads. They mean just as they say, that they are at liberty to determine this way or that way, and then do just as they determine. They are at liberty both subjectively and objectively ; and they consider the former the more important element. The latter they find out by trial.

Now what does consciousness attest in the case in hand ? The subjective action is not that the Professor remains on the stage ; but that he *determines* to remain. And while he thus determines is he not conscious of a power to determine otherwise ? Is he not conscious that he is free to *determine* to go off the stage, or to stand upon his head, or to take any attitude or antic whatever ? Would he consider himself free with any less power in consciousness and in fact ? Could he be conscious of freedom, if his ability to *determine*, to *act subjectively* were hampered or overborne ? Would not such a consciousness be a lie ? And is not the consciousness that witnesses to a power to *determine* to stand still, or to sit, or to walk about, a consciousness of a liberty to act, and not simply a liberty *in acting* ? Is it not a consciousness of an ability, while deciding one way, to decide any other of a variety of ways ? "I believe that if I were at the present moment to put forth such and such energies, they would issue in movements of

my limbs in virtue of which I should step off the platform." Just so. This belief is on the ground of experience. And do you not as firmly believe that you *have power*, that you *are free* to put forth such and such energies? Do you not at least as firmly believe on the ground of consciousness; that is, are you not distinctly conscious, that while you stand by virtue of the subjective action, you are perfectly competent at any moment to change the subjective action in any direction? That is, while you are standing by determination, or as the result of subjective action, are you not conscious of an ability to change the subjective action so as to move the limbs to sit, or to walk, or to do any of a hundred other things, as the result of the new subjective action? Certainly there is such a consciousness; and this is a consciousness not only of *liberty in acting*; but also, of a *liberty to act* in one or other of a variety of ways in which we are not acting at the moment.

The difficulty both with Mr. Mill and Professor Young, seems to arise from their inability to bring their conception of liberty within the sphere of consciousness. They both clearly apprehend and declare, that consciousness has to do only with the actually subjective and present; wherefore as freedom to act in one or other of a variety of ways in which we are not acting at the moment lays hold on what a man might do or will do; that is, on the contingent and the future, they say that this freedom must be outside of the domain of consciousness. Mr. Mill, therefore, says the cause of freedom is lost; because consciousness could be the only effective witness for freedom, and to the fact of freedom, as outside of its sphere it cannot depone. Professor Young would meet Mill, and save freedom by asserting that our freedom is not a *freedom to act*, which he thinks involves the future and the contingent, but a freedom in action, which is subjective and present; and therefore comes within the sphere of consciousness, and is a point of its attestation. This view meets Mill indeed, but it loses genuine freedom. The misapprehension of both these able writers is as to the fact to which consciousness does depone. Now what is that fact? It must of course be a subjective and present fact. It cannot be contingent and future, as these philosophers see. That fact is *freedom to act* in one or other of various ways. This freedom is not *an act*, but a *power*. It is not any action past, present or future; necessary, possible or contingent; but an ever

present, an active and a subjective power. Hence it is ever in the sphere of consciousness. The possible or future subjective act is not in the sphere of consciousness. This is granted to Mill and Young. But the *power* to perform that act, the *power*, the untrammelled *ability*, to act in this or that of many ways *is* in the sphere of consciousness. And this power, this ability to act, is freedom. Whence, freedom to act in one or other of many ways is fully attested by consciousness. The fact attested is the *existence of a power* which is *present*; and not of *an act* which *may be future*.

Before this analysis, this just conception of liberty and its unmistakable proof in consciousness, fall both the theories under review. If Young's, then, *a fortiori*, Mill's. But how shall we be conscious of power otherwise than in acting? I answer, we are conscious of it in the mind's natural and perpetual activity. And here I distinguish "in activity" from "in acting." Intelligent and free activity is the very nature and state of mind. It is the very essence and constitution of rational spirit. Acting is a determinate direction of the mental energy; in Professor Young's language, it is the subjective putting forth of effort in the direction of an end, which is in the mind's view. Activity then is a perpetual condition; acting is the movement of the condition to its legitimate result. Moisture, greater or less, is the perpetual condition of the air. Rain is the movement of that condition under proper coincidences to its legitimate result. Mind is always active; but it is not always in distinctive volition; not always putting forth effort to an end, in its view. Now it is this perpetual activity, this never failing power to act, that we call freedom, and that is in the sphere of consciousness; and not merely the subjective determination to an end, the specific volition in view of motives. It is in this native activity, before acting, that the mind is free to act in this way or that; and consciousness, equal not only to every mental operation, but also to every mental condition and state, sheds its calm and pure light even in these penetralia of our being, this Holy of Holies, and assures us at once of our freedom and our accountability. The very confinement of the spirit within the body, and its connection with it; the very fretting against the material organization, must develop its activity and render it conscious of its liberty even when appetites do not clamor, or affections excite; and when reason is not specially called upon to direct. Every pure spirit

must be conscious of a liberty to decide upon this plan or that, to do this or that, to act in this way or that or the other of different ways possible in the view of the intelligence. Can we suppose that Diety had to act before He found out He is free, and is only conscious of freedom in acting ?

In memory, judgment, perception, imagination, we are conscious of mental acts, often intermitted ; often started and often stopped. They change. The mind passes from one to the other. But in our natural mental activity we are conscious of freedom to act, which is as continuous and uninterrupted as consciousness itself. It is in our very spiritual constitution, the unity and perpetuity of our being. Indeed it is our very self, the bright domain where the man is essentially the man and not the thing. The special characteristics of the rational spirit are to know and to be free, and in consciousness to know that it knows, and that it is free. These are the distinctive marks that must ever separate it from brute-spirit, and from inert matter. This unity of intelligence and liberty in consciousness is ourself-hood, manhood, personality. And careful attention to these marks, would have saved from the specious and seductive phrase of consciousness of liberty only in acting.

The doctrine I am examining is the pivot-doctrine of the whole lecture under review. Hence it is important that we look at it from all sides, that we may the better judge as to the system that turns upon it.

To say that we are conscious of liberty only in acting seems to me not only theoretically, but also practically, to restrict our liberty, and to damage, if not totally destroy it. We feel and know our freedom before acting, in Professor Young's sense of the word ; that is, we are free to act before acting. And of this we are conscious. Else we are not free at all. If it is only after we have commenced determining, after we have fallen into the groove of acting that we are free and conscious of it, necessity is upon us before we are free ; that is, necessity first and freedom afterwards. For as Professor Young says, there is no indifference or a consciousness of it. But necessity first, and freedom afterward, cannot be. Freedom to act is the natural state of man and that of which he is conscious. I am now writing. I feel free to determine to continue, or to cease. This is consciousness of liberty in acting. Propose to me to go out of the room for a certain purpose. I am conscious

of my freedom to act the instant you make the proposition. Your proposition but brings this ever-abiding freedom prominently into present knowledge. And that, before I have in the least decided as to my course, that is, before I act at all in the case before me. The very placing of the alternative before me renders me conscious of my freedom. You appeal; you press. This demonstrates your idea of your own freedom, and your consequent conviction as to the nature of mine. I begin to consider, I hesitate, I think it over, I decide; or I may decide instantaneously upon your proposition. In either case the first thing I am conscious of is my freedom to act in one way or the other. The very fact that you propose renders me conscious of this freedom. And that too prior to any action other than the flash of that conviction of freedom upon the mind. That conviction must be in consciousness before acting; otherwise the mind would not attempt to act. Let it suspect it is not free to act before acting, and it will never act. The lie and the cheat can have no semblance of credit for truth and honesty in the realm of consciousness, omniscient within its domain as God in the world.

This freedom exclusively in acting, as that after the subjective action, would destroy all proper spiritual and intellectual activity. To wait for the consciousness of freedom in acting, as after acting, would be the direst necessity. We must know, be aware, conscious, that we are free to act in one or other of different ways, else we would not act at all. But this freedom in acting drives us into a groove, and then we are free to run in the groove. It is like the liberty of a rail-car, confined to one track. Edwards' freedom is the rail car with its wheels not locked, its piston not clamped, its machinery free to move, no matter what obstructions lie across the track. Young's freedom takes away these obstructions, and lets the car sweep along. But it must run on *that one track*. Necessity starts it. Necessity keeps it in motion and in its line. This is a *freedom to one thing, a freedom in acting*, hedged all around with an unrelenting necessity. But this is not human freedom in its start, progress or termination. This is not the freedom that renders us accountable to God, Himself free. There is nothing in it akin to our liberty to act, to choose any one of different ways within the scope of rational possibility.

I consider that the supreme practical importance of this subject justifies the utmost care in examination, and emphatic repetition

of refutation. It is extremely dangerous to tamper with human liberty. In all history there is no other so fruitful mother of error as necessity in its various phases. Its progeny of false philosophy, corrupt morals and bad life ravages and defiles the earth, and darkens the very heavens. So far as it prevails it checks human progress and blots out human hope. Thank God, the instincts of our race are stronger than the bonds of philosophic systems. Liberty, ineradicable from consciousness, simultaneous and concurrent with consciousness, is never for a moment questioned by earnest men that lead the world, and by the long processions that wend their toilsome way through the valleys and up the hills of time and disappear over the heights that skirt the border land of the unknown and the eternal. It is never doubted by the busy multitudes that enjoy life or endure it; or are lifted in its use to greater heights of enjoyment, or in its abuse are sunk to a greater wretchedness. It is left for the schools and the systems, the dogmas and the creeds to assail this fundamental faith of our race. It is reserved for here and there a theologian and a philosopher to impeach this universal instinct of humanity from infancy to age. While the millions in the conscious exercise of freedom, labor, loiter and rest, struggle and triumph, weep and rejoice; while their heads are bowed amid the realities of life, and all are attentive to the great facts of being, happiness and destiny, or are listless spectators paying no heed thereto, a voice comes from the philosopher who claims to have reached a superior eminence of thought and wisdom, and doubts or denies to the active multitudes their profoundest convictions and their primitive, unsuspected and universally accepted beliefs. Some careless spectators may catch the doubts and noise them abroad; philosophers may rear their systems and mislead and deceive many men; a few of the toilers may lift their heads and listen to the cry for a little. But the vast majority keep steadily engaged grovelling on earth, or climbing to the skies. And we may well thank God that we are so made. To this speculator on his boasted eminence, this compound of credulity, doubt and dogmatism, calling himself the philosopher, the human race is not even the flies sporting in the summer evening, but the swarm swept before the tempest; not even the minnows playing in the quiet water by the shore, but the school borne down and scattered by the sudden torrent. And strangest of all, while carried away of such violence, they fancy they are going in their own proper

motion and are free. Surely it must take something greater and something worse than man to originate and execute such a delusion.

Not by any means that such intentions are charged upon the system under review. But we should be jealous for freedom. For only to a perfect subjective freedom can a perfect responsibility be attached, and nothing less than a perfect and entire responsibility will conserve virtue on earth, or vitally connect man's destiny with the eternal order, the absolute good, the infinite God.

One of the best tests of a doctrine is in its consequences. And thus I propose to measure the doctrine of this pamphlet. The question is, where does this freedom in acting practically leave us? Is it a freedom to which an accountability can be attached: or on which a reform in conduct can be wrought out? Upon this let the author speak. "Motives are the moral causes of our volitions, and the necessity which attaches to their operation is a moral necessity. But what do the expressions moral cause and moral necessity mean? I do not know that any other answer can be given than that they denote the relation between the nature of an intelligent agent and the ends which in given circumstances he prefers, or the actions which under given circumstances he voluntarily performs. One person is tempted to steal a sum of money. He is a good man and resists the temptation. Another is tempted to steal. He is a bad man and gives way to the temptation. In general, the course which a person takes, when certain ends in any respects desirable are present to his mind, will depend on the answer to the question, 'What sort of a person is he?' With given motives brought to bear upon you, you being such a person as you are act as you do; whereas, if you had been a different sort of a person, you would have acted differently. * *

* * * Actions are merely the evolutions of nature, nature unfolding itself. The doctrine of moral necessity, therefore, in so far as it pretends to go beyond the simple fact that men act from motives, is a truism. 'In pursuance of given desirable ends, a man must choose as he does—of course he must; for to suppose his choice different from what it is, would be to suppose that he is a different man from what he is. 'His actions must have a moral cause; they must be according to his nature.' Of course they must; for we conceive nature as of this or that particular sort only by conceiving the actions in which it develops itself,"

Alas for liberty ! If this be freedom, what is necessity ! How is man in a probation on this system ? If he is bad, what hope has he to become good ? If he is good, what fear to become bad ? What hope of reform ? What fear of deterioration ? Character given, and incentives given, conduct is fixed. The good man must become better ; the bad man worse. Or if it be not so, it is not inherent freedom that saves the one and damages the other ; *it is because his circumstances are changed*. Temptations in the one case may be lessened ; in the other increased ; and the man acts accordingly. He has in himself no power to rise and change his course. He cannot rise from vice to virtue, or fall from virtue to vice, by his own motion. By his own act he can make no difference. External circumstances over which he has no control make all the difference. Helplessly drifting down the currents of evil, he can find no foothold, no power to leap in his own liberty. What a dire necessity ! What is this moral necessity but a hundred fold more rigid than any physical necessity ! Let the seed be of such a nature and state, and the heat, light and moisture of such a degree ; then such a plant will sprout and grow, and come to maturity. Let a man be of such a nature under such a pressure, and you can calculate his action by this moral arithmetic. It is more rigid than a mechanical necessity. Let such a pressure be put upon one end of the lever, then the other end must rise ; otherwise, not. Tempt this man with this consideration, he *must* act as he does. Try another with the same consideration ; he *must* act differently. Surely on this system accountability is gone. There is no genuine liberty.

This scheme makes human action but the evolution of the moral nature ; and joins motive and conduct with the link of efficient, or original causation. It destroys the idea that the free being is a cause to himself, has a power of self-control, a governing power amid motives ; and breaks down the distinction between cause of action and occasion of action. In the moral world it is a scheme of development, of self-evolution, very much like the German idealism in the metaphysical world. This latter says that what we call the outer world, all things we see and feel, are but the developments and limitations of our own minds, of the Ego. This moral system says our conduct is but the irrepressible and unchangeable development of our nature. The German rationalism gives us a rigid Pantheism ; and this moral system gives us a

rigid "moral necessity." A man of course has his *nature* to start with, so that his second action is the evolution from the first ; and so on ad-infinitum. Or perhaps the circumstances are to break in on the line of development. According to the system the selection of circumstances would be but a part of the development. But we will allow for argument an interrupting power to outer circumstances ; how will that be better for man's accountability ? How can he be responsible, if his life is overborne either by a developing nature within, or by concatenating circumstances without ? In neither case would he have a moral freedom. He must possess a power of self-assertion, self-direction and self-domination. Nature within may demand ; and circumstances without may clamor ; but he must be lord of the situation, able to choose above both, to decide his course, and act upon his resolve.

After all, this view, repugnant as it is, is consistent with the main position of the lecture, that we are conscious of freedom only *in acting*. Like Hume's Scepticism from Locke's Sensationalism, it is the fair logical sequence of the premises. For if we are not conscious of freedom, as a power to act this way or that on the proposition to act and before the action is taken ; but only a power to do as we are doing, that is, freedom in action, how should it be otherwise than that we should take our groove and run in it ? That is, being good, how is it that we should do otherwise than continue good ; or if bad, continue bad ? The consequences and leanings of such a doctrine are easily seen. This "moral necessity," accruing to consciousness of freedom *in action*, is not the first case of a fatal error for practical life springing out of a metaphysical mistake. And surely this must be an error ; for no more rigid necessity than this moral necessity do we find in the history of Philosophy. It contradicts all human experience and human life. And this must condemn any theory.

Liberty, genuine liberty, is not thus cramped and confined ; nor is it attended by so deplorable consequences. It is perfect ; or it is not at all. It has no degrees ; it admits no fractional scale : It knows no piecemeal action. And this is the reason that the most profound necessarians deny the possibility of liberty. They could not admit its perfectness ; hence they could not admit its existence. We affirm simply that it is perfect ; not that it is omnipotent. It is perfect for man in his sphere. What I believe this perfect liberty to be, I have already more than intimated. It is the *self-*

determining power of the mind upon the motives within its cognition and feeling. I do not for a minute admit that this self determining power is the same as the *liberty of Indifference*, as is maintained in the Lecture. We are not conscious of a liberty of Indifference, as is justly said; but we are conscious of a self-determining power, of a liberty to act subjectively in one or other of many ways we are not acting at this moment. Our liberty is not a liberty of Indifference; but a liberty of activity, of Reason and Intelligence. The mind is active, rational, spiritual and free. It is not shaped and overborne by forces from without; but it arises by its inherent energies, contemplates and measures those forces, and then in the very midst of their urgency and clamor acts its own pleasure, determines itself. It is not a piece of putty or clay to be punched or moulded or impressed as it may be struck or indented by some outside violence; but it is a spirit intelligent and free, to which external influences may pay their court, but whose selection they must abide, and whose nod they must obey. One man may deal with them one way; another man another. Any man may deal with them this way this time, and that way next. There is no Arithmetic of the Will. It often defies both Geometry and Logic. The reasoning may be all right, the conclusion all sound; so that you expect to find the man here; but he turns up over yonder. The next time you say, "Ah, that's his way, is it? That's his law of action? Then I will be able to put my hand on him when I want him." But you put your hand down, and the man is not there. The trouble is, the man is free. Amid all inducements he determines at his pleasure. His subjective action is free. He is free to act, to turn this way or that, to cross from one line of action to another, to extend a previous action or reverse it. And thus it is that we have such a variety of human character. No two men are alike in all respects. Of course there are countless permutations and combinations of external influences and internal dispositions, but these will not explain all the varied and erratic lines of human action. If men were machines, moved and molded by external energies, human conduct would come more within the mathematics of projectiles; and we might readily institute calculations and equations in moral and social dynamics. But the trouble is, men are free. A thousand men may have the same premises, prosecute the same ratiocination, reach the same conviction and doctrine, and after all

no two likely will take the same course of practical external action, the same line of conduct. And in general, what is this external action but the manifestation of the internal, subjective, rational and free energy and action, ruling among the desires and dispositions of the mind and the presentations of the outer world?

This whole question is vexed to death with that most perverse and vicious phrase, "motives determine the Will"; as though motives were active and the Will passive; instead of the Will being active and the motives passive. One would think the outer world came in on the mind, instead of the mind's arising and pressing against the outer world. Another serious difficulty is interposed by substituting the word "Will" for the word "mind" or "agent." It is the mind that acts in willing, just as it is the mind that acts in perceiving or remembering. No subject in the whole range of Philosophy seems to have the faculty of packing so much error in so small a space as this very doctrine of necessity. Take, for instance, the necessarian definition of liberty, "the power to do as we will." What a quiet unassuming phrase. And yet, according to Professor Young's own concession, how subversive of genuine liberty! Even so with this expression, "motives determine the will." The lecture under review makes this doctrine, so replete with error, tantamount to the doctrine, that men act upon motives. Was there ever before so uncompromising an opposition called a reconciliation? The two doctrines are entirely antagonistic, positively and directly antipodal. They are so clearly contradictory, that if the one stands the other must fall. Can darkness and light be reconciled? Then may these opposite doctrines, "motives determine the Will" and "Men act upon motives." The first proceeds upon the disintegration and passivity of mind; the second upon its unity and activity. Surely there needs be no wider distinction than this; for the two doctrines are at the opposite poles of mental Philosophy. The one is the central idea of concatenated error; the other the throbbing heart of living philosophic truth. But a system that arose from confounding Will and Desire could have little difficulty in confounding Activity and Passivity of mind to maintain its consistency and perpetuate its growth.

When we say, "Men act from motives," even this formula would be objectionable, were it designed to convey the idea that in motives there is any efficient causation. The mind is to itself the

efficient cause ; the motive is but the occasion of action. A motive is an occasion to volition, as the presentation of a phenomenon is the occasion to the application of a principle. But with this noticeable difference in the constitution and character of the mind ; there is a freedom in the volition, and a necessity as to the application of the principle of the intelligence. When the motive is presented, the man is not free to will or not will, at his pleasure. He must will, that is, he must determine some way or other. He is not free to will or not will ; but he is free to will or determine in this way or that of a thousand. But he can not apply a principle in this or that way of a thousand. He can apply it in only one way, and that way the law of the Reason. In volition the motive is the occasion of the action, is free ; that is the free and efficient cause. As when we say, the man made the wagon to convey the goods. The man is certainly the efficient cause ; the conveyance of the goods is but the occasion of this work. He was first free to determine to make the wagon, and then free to make it after he had determined. " Being thirsty, he determined to get a drink." The " he " is the efficient cause ; the thirst is the occasion. He might have determined otherwise. Men never act in the proper sense of the word without motives. This is undeniable. But then what are these motives to a being rational and free ? Are they the urgency of the world upon the mind, or of the mind upon the world ? Does the sugar, or the bread, or the money, or the office lay plans upon the man and circumvent and foil and decide and direct him ? Or does the man find in himself certain capabilities and susceptibilities, and seek their employment and satisfaction ? The activity is in the mind. It presses upon the outer world. In its activity it discovers a thousand directions of action ; a thousand reasons, one for determining one way, another for another. It regards them all with equal eye and decides at its pleasure. In its normal state it is master of the situation. The cool eye of Reason surveys the scene, and the strong voice of the Will directs the conduct.

There is nothing approaching efficient causation in motive. The mind has a self-determining power amid all motives. And this self-determining power is by no means the Liberty of Indifference. It is independent and free activity. It is of course expected of a rational being to decide rationally ; but this expectation is often doomed to disappointment. He may take any one of scores

of degrees of divergencies from the rational action, till he has passed completely round the circle to the decidedly opposite and most irrational that could be conceived. And on every radius he is not only free to go one way or the other, but at any time to change to another radius; not only free in acting, but free also to act.

A being rational and free, examines the various motives presented; and proves, not the strength of the motive, but the perfection both of reason and freedom, by choosing the better part. Another may prove the perfection of his reason by reaching the same conclusion; and then show his liberty to abuse his liberty and himself by choosing the worst part. We are free even to abdicate our freedom. Suddenly or slowly we may either establish our freedom for ever, and dwell perpetually in its serene and glorious light; or we may quench its brightness in an everlasting darkness. And herein is the grandest freedom, when a man makes one noble resolve and devotion to virtue, and cleaves thereto for life. The heroes in prison and the martyrs at the stake have been the freest of men, and exemplified the sublimest liberty of Conscience and Reason. And herein is the direst servitude, when a man has given himself over to desire or lust, till the voice of Reason and Freedom, his proper self, is drowned amid the external clamors; and the man by his own act surrendering his manhood, ceasing to be a man and becoming a thing, is whirled away by the currents of passion from the moorings of honor and virtue.

The liberty of Indifference is often in the lecture under review set over against the Edwardian Necessity, and seems to be spoken of as the system of the Libertarians. The alternative is put between it and some kind of necessity; which alternative is by no means exhaustive. This liberty of Indifference is not by any means the scheme of the advocates of the profoundest and loftiest human freedom. It is not even equal to the popular conception of liberty, that stirs the human spirit in all ages and climes. To say the least of it, it is a very unhappy title, and totally misleading as to the true nature of liberty. It is born of a vicious philosophy, and is a prolific source of false imputation and error. Even upon those that have used the phrase to designate genuine liberty, carelessness of language must be charged. It arose in the days of the prevalence of Sensationalism, when the mind was accounted a blank tablet, and our ideas were held all to come from the outer world.

Then of course the mind must wait to be addressed, or like a piece of putty, to be impressed; and until so addressed or impressed it is inactive or indifferent. And as long as it is equally impressed by opposite forces, it remains indifferent; when the balance is disturbed it goes with the "strongest motive."

A liberty of Indifference, or equipoise, or of counterpoise, or preponderance, or prevalence, is every one alike a misnomer, a contradiction of terms, a misrepresentation of the character of mind, the loss of true liberty and a total burial in necessity. This idea of Indifference involves again the doctrine of the total passivity of mind. According to it mind is an inner intelligence, waiting to be approached and wholly determined by what does approach. It is regardless of all things, as the God of Brahminism, till something addresses it. If but one thing addresses it, it must go with that one; if several, it must move with the weightiest, or the one making the strongest claim. This is Edwards' strongest motive system, which Professor Young promptly and vigorously rejects. What can be meant by this Indifference? Is it before the action, before willing; or in and through the action, or after it? Our case before any proposition to act cannot be called Indifference. It is ignorance, non-acquaintance; and we are free in our ignorance. After the proposition to act, there is no longer indifference. There is at once action, or a tendency to action with a consciousness of freedom. Certainly there is no indifference in acting, or in prosecuting the action to external results. The mind is not passive, but active; and even during the hours of consciousness, the play of the faculties on the Will, and the pressure of the Will on the Faculties, give the consciousness of activity, of power, of freedom. But Indifference points to a balance, an equipoise, to which something external is added and turns the scale. It is the old story of the ass between the bundles of hay. In such a system motives govern the will, sway the determination. But this is not the system of the libertarians, nor is it by any means genuine freedom.

The perpetual error is in making motives something wholly external to the mind. Evidently they partake of the character of the mind; for what is motive to one man has no incentive for another. External objects are much the same to all, yet men find in them multiform and numerous impulses. As in our conceptions and judgment the mind supplies the rational form; so in our determinations—the mind supplies the volitional form; but again

with this difference in the very constitution of mind, that the rational form is necessitated, but the volitional is free. And our freedom touches a point far back of the mere dealing with impulses brought into the range of our sensibility and intelligence. Our freedom has very much to do with the formation of our mental character, the very character that gives its tinge to our impulses and volitions. And here, while on the one hand we do not allow that outer circumstances make motives to compel the mind; on the other we are as far from allowing that the mind's own character imposes as dire a necessity and effectually forces or restrains its actions. We do not suffer the doctrine of either a subjective or an objective necessity. Neither do we suffer the doctrine of an Indifference. Our doctrine is liberty. Man is rational, intelligent, active and free. Hence he is accountable; and both morality and religion become not only possibilities, but also facts.

One opening this lecture that has passed under review would suppose that it was about to break away from the trammels of system, and give to man a genuine freedom. Its first propositions are clear for liberty. That voluntary action is a subjective energy directed to a definite end on the mind's view, would appear enough to satisfy any one. But the full force of these clear and concise definitions is subsequently lost in the mazes of the pre-conceived system. It was a noble conception to strike to break these ancient bonds; the scheme is ingenious; but the weapon is insufficient, and the attempt a failure. This liberty *in acting* may be a pleasant thing to contemplate, and an improvement on the old fashioned and faded necessity; but it is not human liberty, which is a liberty *to act*, and which alone can justify government and penalty and law, and make man moral and accountable. Again, "that moral liberty and necessity are the relations which subsist between the nature of an intelligent being and the actions, which under given circumstances he voluntarily performs," might not appear objectionable, if the subsequent explanation in obedience to a system did not destroy every hope. With this expression "under given circumstances" is introduced a rigid necessity; not a moral liberty, but a moral arithmetic. For character being given and circumstances given, you can on this system, calculate a man's moral movements with all the precision of ratios, and all the certainty of the going and returning of the heavenly orbs.

The whole paper affords but another instance of the truth, that it is difficult to break away from venerated systems. It acknowledges the great error of necessarianism, and seeks to escape it. But it tries with force rather than reason. It attempts to reconcile things totally irreconcilable; and regards as adjacent and similar, things that are infinitely separated and totally repugnant. I cannot but look upon it as an effort to show that there is not after all much difference between necessity and freedom, to back down from the high positions of fate and destiny, and live among the sensible people of the world. It is a deference to Reason, an obeisance to the common sense of mankind. And this, we may rejoice is with many and with increasing numbers, regarding these doctrines, a manifest tendency of our times.